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**UAE DESIGNERS
IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

Dubai special



SEA CHANGE

Ahead of the Dubai International Boat Show, we explore how sustainability is increasingly shaping yacht design and aesthetics

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In 2024, the question on every superyacht owner's lips isn't about size, but about green credentials – which span everything from using sustainable suppliers to the materials themselves. “It is important to use appropriate suppliers that are eco-friendly, and if using natural materials, to know they are being sourced in a sustainable way,” says Alex Koersvelt, commercial director at Edmiston. Then there are the things you wouldn't necessarily consider: “Weight is a key factor that affects fuel consumption – like not using marble will save on weight and helps the environment,” Koersvelt explains.

Dilan Saraç, executive director of the Superyacht Life Foundation, says: “With climate change and the damages of plastic hitting the headlines, we have observed builders, designers and owners alike choosing to take steps to improve the footprint of yacht interiors and finishes.”

Of course, materials play a big role. “Biosustainable materials that we use at Njord by Bergman Design House

are defined as materials that are produced and used in a way that minimises harm to the environment, are non-toxic and meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,” says Sarah Colbon, co-founder and director of the luxury design house. Faux leather, mushroom fungi insulation and an earthy, muted aesthetic are very much in.

At Winch Design there is a dedicated in-house sustainable materials specialist. In collaboration with Italian shipyard Cantiere delle Marche, Winch has created the 44-metre explorer yacht Flexplorer 146, due to launch in 2025, with an entirely sustainable interior. Its carpets are made from recycled fishing nets, a green living wall is made from preserved moss, reclaimed seashell composite will be used throughout the bathrooms and the eggshell-textured walls help make use of the 250,000 tonnes of eggshell waste produced annually worldwide. Palm leather, chosen for its durability and an eco-conscious alternative



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to animal leather, will be applied on several furnishings.

Heesen Yachts has an in-house interior manufacturing department, including interior engineers and fine cabinet-makers. “The result is that we have complete oversight of material selection and the entire building process, on site, reducing transport distances,” says Heesen CCO Mark Cavendish. “Heesen’s focus is on utilising alternative materials, such as sustainable woods and materials that can be recycled. A prime example of this is Project Orion, which features a stunning interior by Italian designer Cristiano Gatto, who has utilised farmed teak, high gloss and matte ebony sourced from sustainably certified forestry.”

Randa Hanna, of Map Projects, says sustainability in design is at the forefront of all of the architectural practice’s decisions. It has been working closely with Victory Design, which is a leader in sustainable marine design and has built new yacht Bolide in-house.

“Bolide, probably the world’s fastest superyacht, is currently nominated for five design and innovation awards at the Superyacht Design Festival held by *Boat International* – including the eco award. Speed and lightness are in fact greener than heavy and high-volume yachts,” says Brunello Acampora from Victory Design.



“The advent of 3D printing introduces a fascinating realm, where decorative components emerge from natural materials like eggshells, marine shells, wood powder gleaned from waste and recycled plastics.”

When it comes to the exterior, he adds, “design elements take on a dual role as both aesthetic and sustainable choices, exemplified by light-coloured hulls and superstructures mitigating heat absorption, thermally insulating glazing, and strategic shading to shield against direct sunlight”.

As for some of the challenges facing the increasing demand for sustainability, Colbon of Njord by

Bergman Design House refers to cost.

“Many sustainable materials are more expensive than traditional materials,” she says. “Additionally, availability can be an issue, as sustainable materials are not always readily available in the market, but this is growing dramatically.”

And of course, she adds, it’s about “finding and sourcing alternative, environmentally-friendly materials that minimise impact on the planet without compromising the quality, functionality or design”.

edmiston.com, thesuperyachtlife.com, bergmandesignhouse.com, winchdesign.com, heesenyachts.com, victory.it